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## ABSTRACT

Methods, compositions and articles of manufacture for assaying a sample for a target polynucleotide are provided. A sample suspected of containing the target  
10 polynucleotide is contacted with a polycationic multichromophore and a sensor polynucleotide complementary to the target polynucleotide. The sensor polynucleotide comprises a signaling chromophore to receive energy from the excited multichromophore and increase emission in the presence of the target polynucleotide. The methods can be used in multiplex form. Kits comprising reagents for performing such methods are also  
15 provided.